

## CLAIMS

I/We claim:

- [c1]           1.     A method in a network of switches for handling errors, the method comprising:
- receiving at a switch a transaction request from an initiator communications device;
- transmitting the transaction request through the network to a responding communications device;
- receiving at a switch a transaction response from the responding communications device;
- transmitting the transaction response through the network to the initiator communications device; and
- upon detecting an error during the transmission of the transaction response, terminating the transmission and transmitting an error message to the initiator communications device.
- [c2]           2.     The method of claim 1 wherein the initiator communications device is responsible for handling the error.
- [c3]           3.     The method of claim 2 wherein the handling includes re-transmitting the transaction request.
- [c4]           4.     The method of claim 2 wherein the initiator communications device forwards an indication of the error message to an upper layer for handling.
- [c5]           5.     The method of claim 4 wherein the upper layer is an application layer.

- [c6]           6.     The method of claim 1 including:  
                upon detecting an error during the transmission of the transaction request,  
                terminating the transmission and transmitting an error message to  
                the initiator communications device.
- [c7]           7.     The method of claim 1 wherein the switches, initiator  
communications device, and the responding communications device are part of a  
storage area network.
- [c8]           8.     The method of claim 1 wherein the responding communications  
device is a data store device.
- [c9]           9.     The method of claim 1 including wherein a switch, upon receiving  
the error message, preempts transmission of a data packet to transmits the error  
message.
- [c10]          10.    A method in a switch for handling errors, the method comprising:  
                detecting an error that occurs during transmission of data;  
                identifying a communications device that initiated the transmission of the  
                data; and  
                transmitting an error message to the identified communications device so  
                that the identified communications device can handle the error.
- [c11]          11.    The method of claim 10 wherein the identifying includes retrieving an  
address for the communications device that initiated the transmission.
- [c12]          12.    The method of claim 10 wherein the communications device that  
transmitted the data to the switch is not notified of the error.

- [c13] 13. The method of claim 10 including receiving an error message addressed to an initiator communications device and transmitting the error message to initiator communications device.
- [c14] 14. The method of claim 10 wherein the switch is part of a storage area network.
- [c15] 15. The method of claim 10 wherein the switch does not have logic for handling error messages.
- [c16] 16. The method of claim 10 wherein the error is detected during transmission of a request transmitted from the identified communications device to a responding communications device.
- [c17] 17. The method of claim 10 wherein the error is detected during transmission of a response transmitted from a responding communications device to the identified communications device.
- [c18] 18. The method of claim 10 wherein the identified communications device handles the error.
- [c19] 19. The method of claim 10 wherein the identified communications device initiates the transmission of data by transmitting a request to a responding communications device.
- [c20] 20. The method of claim 19 wherein upon receiving the error message, the identified communications device re-initiates the transmission of data by re-transmitting the request to the responding communications device.

- [c21] 21. A communications device comprising:  
a detection component that detects an error during transmission of data from a transmitting communications device;  
a identification component that identifies a communications device that initiated the transmission of the data; and  
a transmission component that transmits an error message to the identified communications device rather than reporting the error to the transmitting communications device.
- [c22] 22. The communications device of claim 21 wherein identification component identifies the communications device by retrieving an address for the communications device that initiated the transmission.
- [c23] 23. The communications device of claim 21 wherein the communications device is a switch.
- [c24] 24. The communications device of claim 21 including  
a receiving component that receives an error message addressed to an initiator communications device and transmits the error message to initiator communications device without handling the error message.
- [c25] 25. The communications device of claim 21 wherein the communications device is part of a storage area network.
- [c26] 26. The communications device of claim 21 wherein the communications node is a data store device.
- [c27] 27. The communications device of claim 21 wherein the communications device does not have logic for handling errors.

[c28] 28. The communications device of claim 21 wherein the error is detected during transmission of a request transmitted from the identified communications device to a responding communications device.

[c29] 29. The communications device of claim 21 wherein the error is detected during transmission of a response transmitted from a responding communications device to the identified communications device.

[c30] 30. A switch comprising:  
means for detecting an error that occurs during transmission of data;  
means for identifying a communications device that initiated the transmission of the data; and  
means for transmitting an error message to the identified communications device so that the identified communications device can handle the error.

[c31] 31. The switch of claim 30 including wherein the means for identifying includes means for retrieving an address for the communications device that initiated the transmission.

[c32] 32. The switch of claim 30 wherein the means for transmitting does not notify the communications device that transmitted the data to the switch of the error.

[c33] 33. The switch of claim 30 including:  
means for receiving an error message addressed to an initiator communications device and transmitting the error message to initiator communications device.